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GLIMPSES

NARENDRa did not believe that God incarnates Himself as man on any special mission; Infinity could never limit itself into the finite form of a man. Is He not present in every being? Why then, single out a particular individual as His manifestation? Girish, on the other hand, was a staunch believer in *Avatārvāda*. For the deliverance of humanity it is absolutely necessary that He should come down on earth in the shape of man. Who else would bring light to him if God did not set the example of righteousness in some impersonated form?

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA expressed his wish that the two should discuss the subject before him. Immediately there followed a debate which judged from the intellectual point of view was interesting to the extreme. After they went on for some time the Master said:—“These discussions have hardly any interest for me. I am *seeing* that all this is He. What should I argue when I *see* that He has become all this?

THIS (Naren's view) is true, and that (Girish's view) is true too. In one state the self loses itself in Infinity. When I see Naren my mind is merged into Infinity. Unless I come down a few steps from that

(superconscious) state I cannot speak. Vedanta, as explained by Sankara is true. Again, Ramanuja's *Vishistadvaitabād* is also true. Take a *bale* fruit for instance. A man put the seeds, the pulp and the shell of the fruit apart. Now it was necessary to ascertain the weight of the fruit. Would you get the weight by weighing the pulp alone? You have to weigh the seeds, the pulp and the shell together. At first sight it appears that the shell is nothing, the seeds are nothing, the pulp is every thing. But if you think a little you shall see that the seeds and the shell all belong to the same thing of which the pulp forms a part. At first you start with “not this,” “not this”—this world is not God, man is not God and so on. Brahman is the only thing, all else is no-thing. Then comes the realisation that the universe has come out of the same substance which was first designated as Brahman (in contradistinction to the world). The Absolute and the Relative are both different phases of the same substance. Ramanuja, therefore, taught that Brahman comprises *Siva* and *Jagat*. But what should I argue, having a direct vision of the truth? I am seeing that He has become all this. He has become the universe, He has become all that dwells in it.”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

ADVICE TO THE WORLDLY-MINDED--III

Before soldiers go out to fight the enemy they learn the art in a fort, where they do not have to put up with hardships incident to action in the open. So, avail yourselves of the conveniences of your home-life to raise your spiritual condition before you take to the austerities of asceticism.

As persons living in a house infested with venomous snakes are always alert and cautious, so should men living in the world be always on their guard against the allurements of lust and greed.

Live in the world but be not worldly as the verse sayeth:— “Make the frog dance in company with the snake but let not the snake swallow it. Catch fish, but don’t touch the water.”

A SNAKE dwelt in a certain place. No one dared pass that way. For whoever did so was instantaneously bitten to death. Once a Mahâtmân passed by that road, and the serpent ran after the sage in order to strike him. But when the snake approached the holy man he lost all his ferocity, and was overpowered by the gentleness of the Yogin. Addressing the snake the sage said, ‘Well, friend, thinkest thou to strike me?’ The snake was abashed and made no reply. At this the sage said, ‘Hearken, friend, do not injure anybody in future.’ The snake bowed and nodded assent. The sage went his own way and the snake entered his hole, and thenceforward began to live a life of innocence and purity without even attempting to harm anyone. In a few days all the neighbourhood began to think that the snake had lost all his venom, and was no more dangerous, and so everyone

began to tease him. Some pelted him, others dragged him mercilessly by the tail, and in this way there was no end to his troubles. Fortunately the sage again passed by that way, and seeing the bruised and battered condition of the good snake, was very much moved, and inquired the cause of his distress. At this the snake replied, ‘Holy Sir, this is because I do not injure any one, after your advice. But alas! they are so merciless!’ The sage smilingly said, ‘My dear friend, I simply advised you not to strike any one, but I did not tell you not to defend yourself. Although you should not injure any creature, still you should keep aggressors at a considerable distance by hissing at them.’ Similarly if thou livest in the world, make thyself feared and respected. Do not injure anyone, but do not, at the same time, let others injure you.

If you put a purifying agent, say, a piece of alum, into a vessel of muddy water, the water is purified and the impurities settle down at the bottom. Viveka (discrimination of the Real *i. e.*, God, from the unreal *i. e.*, the phenomenal universe) and Vairagya (non-attachment to the world) are the two purifying agents. It is through these that the worldly man ceases to be worldly and becomes pure.

IT does not matter much whether you are a family man or not, but always do your duties unattached, with your mind fixed on God. As for instance the man who has got a carbuncle on his back talks with his friends and others or even does other works, but his mind is all the while on his abscess.

A VISIT TO KEDAR-BADRI.

"Whoever feels in the inmost depth of his heart a deep longing to realize the infinite beatitude of the Great Almighty, should not lose the earliest opportunity of seeing the boundless ocean, the deep trackless forests and the lofty snow-crested mountains."

I AVAILED myself of the opportunity which presented itself last summer, to visit Kedarnath and Badarikasram high up in the Gharwal district of the great Himalayan range, which are regarded as two of the holiest and most difficult pilgrimages of India.

I, with one of my brother Sanyasins reached Rishikesh on the 5th April last, which is nearly 16 miles from Haridwar. It is situated on the bank of the Ganges which flows at the foot of the hills with a peculiarly charming cadence. Large fishes were seen playing fearlessly where the people were bathing. The place is specially fitted for the Sadhus who want to spend their days in retirement and meditation. We found here four *chatus* (places where cooked food is given away) which supply Sadhus with *madhukari*, (literally the profession of a *madhukara*, a bee ; thence begging only a crumb of food from each place) chiefly consisting of bread and *dil*, which is sufficient for a Sadhu to keep his body and soul together. We were very glad to see a few Sanyasins living in small thatched huts on the Ganges and passing their days in seclusion and meditation.

We put up at Suryamalla Set's *chatra* for 10 days and left on the afternoon of the 14th. As we proceeded toward Lachmanjhola, we had to pass through a path between two hills and reach-

ed it the same evening—a distance of only 3 miles from Rishikesh. Formerly here was a rope bridge, which has been replaced by an iron hanging bridge to the great convenience of pilgrims. We passed through 12 resting places called *chatis*, nearly 3 or 4 miles apart from each other and reached Devaprayag in four days which is nearly 40 miles from Rishikesh. On the way we had to make a tiresome uphill journey of 3 miles near Bijni *chati*, which is 15 miles from Rishikesh. Devaprayag is on the confluence of Bhagirathi and Alakananda. There are many shops, a Post Office and a Govt. charitable dispensary at this place. The path branches off here—one runs past Bhagirathi and leads to Gangotri (the source of the Ganges) and the other passes by Alakananda and leads to Badarikasram. The scenery of this place is charming. The path to Gangotri leads across another iron hanging bridge. We took the other path and reached Srinagar in one day, which is only 20 miles from Devaprayag. This path was comparatively easy.

Perhaps the reader is aware that the old town of Srinagar has been washed away by the great Gohna flood, leaving only a large sandy bed in its place. Here we found a temple of Kamaleswar Mahadev. Sadhus get *sadibrata* (alms of uncooked food) in the temple. The new Srinagar is situated on the Alakananda.

between two hills nearly a mile apart from each other. Here is a Post and Telegraph Office and a Govt. charitable hospital. There are two other *sudarshans* here. The new Srinagar looks like a picture and its beauty has been much enhanced by a nice road in the centre, with shops and shady trees on either side of it.

After resting for a day, at Sant Sing's *dharmasala* (way-side shed) we started for Rudraprayag, 26 miles from Srinagar and reached the place in 2 days passing by 5 minor *chatis*. It is situated on the confluence of Alakananda and Mandakini. We saw a temple of Rudreswar Mahadev here. Two rivers flow here from different directions and give rise to roaring, foamy torrents. Here again the path is divided, one leads to Badarikasram and the other to Kedarnath. We had to cross an iron hanging bridge here to take the Kedar path.

The Kedarnath range is 49 miles from Rudraprayag. As we walked on we were much pleased to see on the sides of the hills many patches of crops growing abundantly. We were also much impressed at the sight of many lofty mountains almost piercing the heavens.

The mountain paths are generally very difficult with their up and down hills. We were surprised to note that the pilgrims mostly consisted of Punjabi women, whose nerve, dignity and deep earnestness of faith were beyond all admiration.

We reached Guptakashi in 3 days, 25 miles from Rudraprayag passing by 8 *chatis* on the way. About half-way our progress was stopped by rains. We found large and beautiful temples of

Bisweswar and Annapurna and many shops as well as a Post Office here. For the first time in our journey we saw from this place clearly the snow-crested peaks of distant mountains. After 16 miles from Guptakashi the path is again divided—the one directly leading to Kedarnath and the other to the temple of Triyoginarayan which is reached by making a difficult uphill journey of 3 miles. These two paths unite after a distance of about 4 miles, near an iron hanging bridge, 5 miles from Gourikunda. Gourikunda is 40 miles from Rudraprayag ; this distance we travelled in 4 days. We stopped one night at Gourikunda. There is a temple of Gouri and two Kundas (springs) here; the water of one is intensely cold and that of the other hot, which is exceedingly accommodating to the pilgrims.

Early in the morning of the 27th we left Gourikunda and reached Rambara *chati*, 4 miles from Kedar, after crossing a bed of snow. We were bare-footed and this was the first time we walked on snow. At the *chati* we heard that we would have to walk upon three miles of snow to reach Kedarnath.

From this place the pilgrims began to march in solemn procession. After going about half a mile, we began to meet with patches of snow and gradually our feet became so used to it, that we did not feel the painful chill sensation as before. Here we found 2 or 3 shops. After walking one mile more we reached the most difficult and dreadful path. Before us there was a sloping hill, covered with snow with no path except that marked out by the tread of the pilgrims who had gone be-

fore. As the sun rose above the horizon the snow began to thaw : consequently stones were getting loose and falling down from the side of the hill. Here, one false step meant a terrible ending of the body, or the impact of one of the stones that were falling from above would crush one to death. For a time the situation seemed dreadful and the difficulty almost insurmountable. Those who were going in *Jhampans* had to get out and walk. It was dead silence all around, only disturbed at intervals by the faint voices of the pilgrims uttering "Siva Kedar, Siva Kedar". Somehow or other, by the grace of Siva Kedar we passed through this ordeal with choked breath and tottering steps and came upon a field of snow. Now the path became easier, though in some places we went knee-deep into the snow.

As we marched on, the shining gilded spire of the distant temple came in view and filled our mind with inexpressible joy and reverence. In whichever direction we turned our eyes, we saw nothing but snow mountains. The sun was shining brightly and the whiteness of the snow, heightened by the sunlight, began to dazzle our eyesight. At noon we reached the Mandakini which flows by the temple of Kedar. We crossed the wooden bridge and reached the temple. It is a large square building with a dome over it and a pointed gilt spire on the top like an ordinary Siva temple, emerging, as it were, out of an ocean of snow. Here and there we saw the tops of the houses of the Pandas peeping through the snow. We heard that from the month of *Kartic* (middle of

October) to the month of *Chaitra* (middle of April) the doors of the temple remain closed, for it gets covered with snow with the exception of only a little portion. When summer sets in, the snow thaws, and the doors are opened in the middle of the month of *Baisakh* (beginning of May). This year the doors were opened on the 16th of *Baisakh*.

It was a grand sight. There was a concourse of pilgrims from different parts of India and Sadhus of different sects. The whole atmosphere resounded with the sweet name of Siva Kedar.

But the harmony was marred, as even here on this bleak height, King Mammon's rule extended. The Pandas standing at the doors refused entrance to the pilgrims, without distinction of Ashrama. They demanded fees and raised other obstacles. At last when pressed too hard, they let the cat out of the bag. They would not let anyone in before the Maharaja Durbhang, who was to come there in an hour or so. This was to secure a handsome fee from the pious Maharaja, on the pretext, that they made him the *first* worshipper of Kedarnath that year. At this a band of Sadhus chid the Pandas for their greed and compelled them to open the doors and let them in. But the majority of the Pilgrims were not allowed to go in before the Maharaja, who came up presently.

The temple is divided into two compartments. We entered the first room having an image of the holy bull in the middle, and three doors opening outside. It has another door which opens

into the second room containing the stone symbol of Kedarnath. It was partially lighted by many lamps fed by *gher* offered to Siva by the pilgrims.

Millions of devotees have been coming and worshipping here with hearts full of reverence and piety, from ancient times, and the place has been sanctified and there has been a special manifestation of the Almighty. The whole atmosphere breathes purity and holiness. We watched the pilgrims touching and embracing the image of Siva and pouring *tilwa* leaves and water upon It with thrilling interest. Their simple and earnest devotion was an exquisite treat to us.

We left the temple at about 2-30 P. M. At about 4 P. M. we reached the edge of the ridge from whence began the awful snow-covered, slippery bank which has already been described as the path,—a climb down this time. The melted snow revealed at places rough stones arranged like a big flight of steps. It was while coming down these that a Punjabi lady about 30, lost her foothold and slipped down a few yards. Her fellow pilgrims picked her up, but her spine was broken and she died in a few minutes. Two Sadhus helped her only companion to consign the corpse to the river. The event aroused deep feelings.

We returned to the Rambara *Chati* before evening and passed the night there.

The temple of Badrinarayan is only 3 miles from that of Kedar, as the crow flies, but as they are separated by high mountain walls, pilgrims reach Badarikasram in ten days by a roundabout path of nearly 100 miles.

We reached *Nala chati* in two days, one mile north of Guptakashi. Hence the path to Badarikasram. After crossing the iron hanging bridge on the Mandakini and making a troublesome up and down hill journey of nearly 2 miles we reached Akhi math. We found no Sanyasins there. The priest in charge of the Kedar temple lives and worships Kedarji here for 6 months, when the Kedar range is entirely covered with snow. From the Akhi math we reached Dharmasala *chati* in one day which is nearly 12 or 13 miles. Here is the path to Tunganath which is situated on the top of a hill nearly 5 miles in height. The temple of Tunganath remains also covered with snow for 6 months.

We passed by 6 *chatis* and reached Peepul *chati* which is 25 miles from the Dharmasala *chati*. Here we found a few good shops. We waited here for 3 days as the doors of the Badrinarayan temple were not to open till the last day of the month of *Baisakh* (about the middle of May). From this place it was four days' walk to Badarikasram.

In the Kumar *chati*, 12 miles from Peepul *chati* we found a few shops of the Banias from Almora. Here are sold musk, tails of the Yak cow, and *silajit* (popularly considered as 'sweat of the stone', used for medicinal purposes and as a tonic).

We stopped at the Yosi math for a day. Here we found a Post Office, a Police station and a Govt. charitable hospital and a good many shops. Srinat Sankaracharya founded a temple of Yotiswar Mahadev here. Hence the name of Yosi math. This is one of the four maths established by Sankaracharya in the

four corners of India. There is an image of Nrisinhaji in the math. No Sanyasins live here now. The worshipper of Badri-narayan lives here with his family.

We passed through Vishnuprayag *chati* and three other *chatis* and reached Hanuman *chati* in two days. From here Badarikasram is only three miles. We reached Badarikasram in the afternoon of 10th May after crossing patches of snow in five or six places. Badarikasram is a large field surrounded on two sides by lofty snow-crested mountains. There was a Post Office for the season here. It is full of shops and houses of the Pandas with the temple in the centre. Here is a *Tapta kunda* (hot spring) which is very soothing to the pilgrims. The scenery of the place is so charming, and elevating that it defies all human language. As we reached the place and looked all around, we were taken back to the days of hoary antiquity,—the days of Nara Narayan who passed their days in great *Tapasya* here,—days of Uddhava and Vidura who closed the chapters of their lives in meditation here—the days of the ancient sages and Rishis who wanted to live in the secluded caves of Badarikasram to devote their lives to self-culture and introspection.

We passed that night there and next afternoon, through a great rush, we made our way into the temple and beheld with great joy the beautiful images of Lakshmi Narayan.

I cannot conclude this short paper without narrating a most striking spectacle we saw on our return from Badarikasram. As we were coming back

we met a group of Punjabi women who were going to Badarikasram. They asked us, that should we on the way meet with a lady carrying a babe in her arms, to tell her that they were waiting for her and that she should mend her pace and join them. After coming nearly half-a-mile, we met a lady of that description slowly walking over the snow. We told her to meet her people as soon as possible.

We saw the baby enjoying a good sleep on its mother's shoulders. As we left her, we began to think with wonder that these ladies never thought, in their eagerness to come on a pilgrimage, that the child of 3 months,—for it was not more,—would die of cold! *Dharma* first, and other things next, even children, husbands and homes. That is the true Indian woman,—yes, even now, in these degenerate days.

PRAKASHANANDA.

BUT this beauty of Nature which is seen and felt as beauty, is the least part. The shows of day, the dewy morning, the rainbow, mountains, orchards in blossom, stars, moonlight, shadows in still water, and the like, if too eagerly hunted, become shows merely, and mock us with their unreality. Go out of the house to see the moon, and it is mere tinsel; it will not please as when its light shines upon your necessary journey. The beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoons of October, who ever could clutch it? Go forth to find it, and it is gone: 'tis only a mirage as you look from the windows of diligence. The presence of a higher, namely, of the spiritual element is essential to its perfection.—EMERSON.

A PALMYRA PALM

Why has not man a microscopic eye?—*Pope.*

O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a Kingdom wherein to rule and create—know this of a truth: The thing thou seekest is already within thee, here or nowhere, couldst thou only see it.—*Carlyle.*

ASAGE, sitting beneath a palmyra palm—the pride of the tropics,—whose tapering stem rose erect to the height of seventy feet and whose beautiful fronds reared high toward heaven, protected him from the fierce rays of the mid-day sun, picked up a seed and asked himself these questions. “Who”, said he, earnestly regarding the seed he held, “could divine the tremendous potentialities secreted within your limited compass! Who would venture to foretell the future greatness to which you may attain! To predict your amazing productiveness! Thus apostrophizing the invisible germ contained in the tiny shell, he thought how impossible it was to overestimate the value of the palm, “that prince of the vegetable kingdom,” as it has been well designated. Of what extraordinary economic wealth it was to man, furnishing such rich and abundant stores for his use. How in India, and other parts of Asia, it formed the main support of many thousands of the population, providing food which rendered it most valuable to the natives. Its gracious spreading branches afforded a grateful shelter to many animals, and its moisture was a haven of delight to orchids, ferns and other plants which attached themselves to its trunk. From its root, medicine was obtained; food was supplied by the young plants, and the older wood was serviceable for walking-canapes, umbrella handles, and building requirements. The leaves also came in for their share of usefulness, such as thatch for houses, besides

giving material for writing-paper, mats and sundry other articles. When young, the trees yielded sap, called palm-wine or toddy, from which palm sugar was extensively manufactured: and last, but not least, the wood became valuable for timber, when the trees had reached an advanced age—say, a century. In fact, there were more than eight hundred uses to which it could be put, and the sage marvelled at its surprising yieldingness, as he recognised that not one part of all its vast growth but served a purpose. Soliloquizing thus, on the magnitude of its life, his reflections turned from the tree to man, and introspectively following the train of thought thus opened up, the well-known line of a poet's fancy passed through his mind—“God will not give me less than the trees!” The seed appeared to him a symbol of his own nature, typifying the inherent capabilities of mankind. If a microscopic eye could be applied to the embryo man, would not his glorious potencies be descried in the germ? For had he not all the essentials for becoming a god? Granting their existence, why not affirm with equal certainty, a spiritual conception of perfection for him, equivalent to the perfect plant development of the palm? As the whole tree is contained within the diminutive seed, was it not also an immortal truth that the divine nature is concealed in man—not as a part only, nor as a separate thing, nor as a modification of the Deity—nay! but as the pure, happy, eternal Reality

Itself now hidden by the great world-hallucination?

In this way, the sage ganged the depths of his heart, and gradually awakened to the true understanding of the divinity within himself, the nature of the Self. The perfect life unfolded in a wonderfully beautiful and

mystical manner to his clear vision and he perceived that when man realized the Unitary Spirit as dwelling in all beings, he need no longer strive and suffer, but would know the perfect happiness of an endless holy peace which passes all comprehension.

ADVAITIN.

DON'T-TOUCHISM

मुक्ति युक्तमुपादेयं वचनं वालकादपि
अवत् लग्नमिव लज्जमध्युक्तं पद्मजन्मन॥

A WORD, when reasonable, is acceptable, even if it comes from a child, but when otherwise, should be cast aside like a bit of straw even if it comes from the lotus-born (Brahmā) himself.

यस्तक्त्वा नुस्खत्ते स एव बेदीनाप्तः

That which is demonstrable by reason is the Veda—not the opposite.

Observations, like these, of the sacred Shāstras, ripe with the concentrated wisdom of ages and very deservedly elevated to the rank of by-words, bear undoubted testimony to the fact that the Rishis of old were by no means partial to those fanciful dogmatic modes of thinking, best known to us by the expressive epithet 'superstition'. It is admittedly true that the range of human knowledge is limited and the words 'why' and 'how' belong to a species whose origin must remain enfolded in the darkness of ignorance, so long as man has to feel his way with the help of such light as is at his present command. But it does not by any means follow from this that man is to remain inert where he happens to be and never exert himself to light the gloom of his surroundings, lest in the attempt he makes darkness more hideous by bringing it into contrast with the feeble rays which he might be successful in letting in. It is rather that he should always try to advance

the outposts of his light in all directions farther and farther into the regions of darkness, and seize and raze to the ground her fortresses, even at the risk of losing a few lives and making some mistakes. For this is the inevitable path of education and progress. Let us live up to the truth which is shining upon us to day : to-morrow if a greater light dawns, we shall find out the pitfalls which beset our path, and shall be the first to leave it behind.

The newer and newer regions to which science is ever pushing on her conquest and the searching and welcome light which she is shedding on all the highways and by-ways of human thought, conspire to make it impossible as days go by, to look upon life in its widest possible sense as anything but strictly *one and uniform* in its essential nature, however variegated and manifold might appear the vests by which it makes itself manifest. The dream of the most indefatigable chemist is to find out the *one atom*, which is the parent of all the rest. The ambition of the boldest physicist is to get a glimpse of *the force*, which pervades in its unbroken unity all the other forces of which the universe is an ordered whirlpool. And the successful biologist traces the *uniformity of structure* with an unerring instinct down from the unicellular protozoa or

protozoa, up to the highest mammal which stands at the head of life on earth.

Nor is this view of life strange to the Hindu. Without soaring into the lofty heights of the monistic Vedanta, which cannot as a matter of fact see anything but *unity* under the manifold veil of appearances, the commonest sayings of the Shastras—gems of wisdom, which now obtain amongst us as adages, echo the identical sentiment. उदार विद्यामनु वसुष्वेष कुट्टव्वा* is one in point. "The whole world is blood-relation to the broad-minded man"—to render it literally. The broad-minded, the enlightened, the man who has been able to get at the "first principles" of things, cannot but feel that the life that throbs in him is *one undetached ray* of the Universal current.

The question we now anticipate as already forming in the reader's mind is: "Though life is *one* in the whole universe, it has expressed itself in forms admitting of *various* grades of excellence. It will not do to ignore difference and distinction when they really exist, and attempts to indiscriminately amalgamate all grades cannot but result in disaster."

We are fully alive to the importance and the far-reaching wisdom of this observation. It is dangerously foolish to ignore differences when they do exist; and to hold that there is no distinction and difference among the infinite grades of life in the universe, when no two individuals could be found alike, would be to distrust in one's own existence in the present. What we really do want to urge, and feel we cannot too strongly do it, is that the greatest circumspection is necessary and our best judgment should be exercised to understand and specify these differences, and to lay down principles, by acting according to which the highest progress might be secured for each grade at the cost of the least friction and resistance possible; and conversely, to set up a strong and invincible current of thought to abolish all those blind, hence indiscriminate barriers, of the *un-Shas-*

trai doxy of 'Don't-touchism,' constructed during ages of social ignorance and decrepitude, in places and things which admit of no virtual distinction. For,—to continue in our metaphor of barriers—the setting up of them, at almost every step, on a green, level and smooth, is not a whit less detrimental to the progress of the journey of an individual or individuals over it, and not less worrying, hence enervating to the individual or social energy, than the absence of them on the edges of pits and bogs. And we feel necessary to state it here, directly, as our matured conviction, that the *education* of the masses, as to the value of our much-needed social reforms, is the *only* method by which permanent success can be gained; and that this education should not proceed on Western lines alone, but must be congenial and sympathetic to the present condition of the people, both mental and physical, and embrace that side of the question which is advocated by the Shastras. We repeat, we should not throw away the experience of the nations, that all progress, to be real and permanent, must come spontaneously from within, as the blossom which conviction bears on attaining maturity,—and that even the state of paradise should not be forced upon a people, who do not happen to be prepared to receive it.

Perhaps no one having a tolerable acquaintance with the Hindu Shastras will find himself at variance with us, when we say, that the whole superstructure of the Hindu civilization with its laws and customs, which regulate every act of the individual and the social life, has been planned out and built with a *single*

**Apropos* of what is pointed out here as the *principle* of reform, the reader is requested to carefully peruse the weighty utterances of Prof. Dr. Flinders Petrie, on 'Race and Civilization' from his place as President of the section of anthropology, at a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Ipswich, 1895. Report of the B. A. 1895, pp. 816—824.

purpose,—one over-mastering motive in view, that of making every individual within its fold, according to its stage of progress, *prepare for Moksha or Self-realization*. All other considerations go down before this. The life here is essayed to be made pre-eminently a life of preparation for the life spiritual. Saturated with this thought our Rishis set to work and divided the whole phenomena of universal life into three distinct grades ; Sâtric, Rajasic, and Tâmasic. It is well-known how this classification has been carried to each plane of life as well as to the genera, species, and individuals comprising it ; and how each life has been enjoined to keep itself aloof and safe from the cross influence of others, for the preservation of its internal harmony. Here we have got the root principle of which the modern 'Don't-touchism' is an abnormal growth.

Now to enable us to see the monstrous folly of the present 'Don't-touchism' clearly and fully let us, in the first place, enquire what the gunas, Satva, Rajas and Tamas, are in their essential nature. The Sankhyâ philosophy tells us—and here Vedânta is at one with it,—that they are three different forms of one and the same creative energy called Prakriti. The 14th chapter of the Gîtâ contains an exhaustive account of their respective natures and functions : and we shall not be far from the truth, if (without entering into any further details about them here) we state, that the idea of Prakriti corresponds exactly to the *unknown energy* of modern physical science, of which all forms of forces, as magnetism, electricity &c., are manifestations ; and that Satva corresponds to (to coin a more or less new terminology) spiritual magnetism, Rajas to animal, and Tamas to terrestrial. On a reference to the section of the Gîtâ mentioned above it will be seen that the Satva is marked by its working towards the consciousness of non-attachment and freedom from the fetters of the mind and the senses (and so we have named it 'spiritual magnetism'), the Rajas, by the activity

of the mind and the senses (and so, 'animal magnetism') and the Tamas, by being enveloped by the sensuous and fleshly and so being helplessly tied to the earth and earthly more and more (and so, 'terrestrial magnetism'). And when we remember that according to the Shastras, all things and organisms in the universe have in their constitution all of these three gunas in varying degrees, so that, even the celestial Devas are no exceptions to this rule, and that the way to perfection or Self-realization consists in having the Satva or spiritual magnetism as much as possible, and surely in a much greater degree than both the other two combined, the solicitude of the Hindu laws and injunctions to guard against cross magnetisms will be understood in its proper light.

Here we shall quote a few Shlokas from well-known authorities, in which are described the ways by which contamination takes place.

आसनाच्छयनादानाद्वाषणाद्वाष्टभीष्मनात्।

स'क्रामति हि पापानि तैलविष्टुरिवाचस्ति ॥

"By sitting, - sleeping, travelling (in a conveyance) talking and eating together, contamination spreads like a drop of oil on water" (Parashara).

स'लापस्यर्थं लिङ्गासप्तसहश्चायामनाशनात्।

याज्ञनाध्यापनाद्वीपात्पापस्त्रक्रामतेरुषाम्॥

"Through chit-chat, touch, and breath, lying, sitting and eating together, conducting religious service, giving lessons, and marriage, contamination spreads among man". (Devala.)

Of all these acts, naturally, the most important are those of taking food and marriage : and indeed, we find the modern 'Don't-touchism', a genus, of which eating and marrying are the species. So far so good. But directly as we enter into the details, directly as we enquire how these acts are done, and what precautions are taken to protect against cross-magnetism or contamination, we find ourselves face to face with that tremendous absurdity which has been so aptly christened "Don't-touchism," by the Swâmi Vivekânanda. At present we are concerned with the species 'eating'.

Cooking, serving and taking food in company with others,—the 'individuals' of the species eating, have been enjoined to be discriminated. The person who prepares and serves food, must not be one, from whom the currents of cross-magnetism are likely to flow and charge and contaminate the food. So also in respect to the company with whom the food is eaten. Now, without entering into the worth or otherwise of this idea, we ask: Is this precaution taken in the choice of the cook, waiter, and company now-a-days? Is the belief consistent with the present practice? The cook and the waiter are as a rule drawn from the most uncultivated and lowest section of the caste, ninety-nine per cent of whom are immoral and Tamasic in the worst sense of the terms. No thought is also taken or discrimination exercised in regard to the company at table (in the *pamkti*) if all of them happen to be of the same caste. But if a sat purer and superior person of another caste cooks the food, or even does so much as touch it, a Brahman cannot take it. He shall not also sit in the line. What is all this if not sheer and deliberate blindness? Where is the harm of eating at the same table (*pamkti*) with even a *pariah*, if he happens to be a pure and Sâtvic person? Some will say it is not usual for a *pariah* to be pure and Sâtvic. Well—yes, nor is it usual for all Brahmins to be pure and Sâtvic now-a-days. *Mind we are talking of the present alone.* Is it sane to grovel in a pit for eternity, if it happened to have furnished security at one time?¹ Is it rational to move for all time in a groove which chanced to offer firm foothold some time, centuries back? Do the members of the four castes now answer to the same definition of their respective distinctions as they did before?

According even to the most orthodox ideas, it is the *Shruti* alone, the foundation of the Sanâtana Dharma which cannot change or undergo any modification; but the *Smritis*,

the codes of institutes which regulate the whole social phenomena, have always been modified more or less to meet the requirements of advanced times. Why cannot the same be done now? But we are drifting into another subject,—though it is a subject of the most paramount importance as regards the future of the whole Hindu nation. It will be our duty to discuss it on a future occasion. For the present we ask again why should we not exercise our judgment and act according to its behests in the matter of the 'species' eating? The general plan of the Hindu superstructure may be good for all time; we do not question it, but shall we succumb to the fatuity of staking our lives to holding that every piece of timber, stone or mortar in it will last for eternity?

We have already stated that we do not believe in the blind and indiscriminate obedience to any usage or custom simply because it happened to have existed for a time. On the same principle we set our face against the forcible introduction of any new custom. So, in regard to the 'species' eating, of the genus 'Don't-touchism,' we ask each of our readers to examine the position well and consider the 'pros' and 'cons' to the best of his judgment and then act fearlessly up to the conclusion which he reaches, without trying to reconcile himself weakly to the side which happens to be arrayed against him, though it seems to be the strongest. Even a great mistake on this principle of conduct cannot but lead to *Truth* in the long run.

TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The gods know him for a Brahman who has cast off anger and passion, who always speaks the truth here, who gratifies his preceptor, who, though himself injured, never returns the injury, who has his senses under control, who is virtuous, pure and devoted to the study of the Vedas, is master of lust, is endowed with mental energy, is catholic in religion and looks upon all beings as himself.—*Mahâbhârata*.

REVIEWS

THE TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD with the Commentaries of Sankaracharya, Suresvaracharya and Vidyaranya. Translated into English by *A. Mahadeva Sastri*, B. A., Curator, Government Oriental Library, Mysore. Part I—II. Foolscap 8vo., 1899—1900.*

The testimony already given by Mr. Sastri of his ability as a translator of Hindu Scriptures is a guarantee of the high merits of any work that bears his authorship and we are glad to see that the present work fully bears out the truth of this assertion. The translation of philosophical works generally involves obscurities which are too trying for an ordinary reader: but Mr. Sastri's work is admirably free from these intellectual stumbling-blocks. His simplicity of style has not, as is unfortunately the case with many such works, been achieved at the cost of accuracy, for we have gladly noted Mr. Sastri's close and careful fidelity to the original as one of the most prominent features of his work. Besides these literary merits, his Taittiriya Upanishad possesses the immense value of comprising the commentaries of the greatest Upanishad authorities, *viz.*, Sankaracharya, Sureshvaracharya and Sayanacharya, all of whom, trying to interpret this classical Upanishad from the same point of view, beautifully supplement each other's work. Sayana's introduction to the study of the Upanishad (which forms the first part of the book) is highly interesting and discusses the following questions with great logical skill:—

(1) What is the specific the of the Upani-

shad?

(2) What is the end in view?

(3) What is its relation to the other parts of the Veda?

(4) For whom is its teaching intended?

The author's own notes, in many places bring out clearly many questions involved in the principal points at issue and enables the reader to have a thorough grasp of them. Students of Indian philosophy will find a good deal to learn in this valuable work.

We also beg to acknowledge with thanks receipt of the first three volumes of the Upanishads published by Mr. V. C. Seshachari, B. A., B. L., M. R. A. S., High Court Vakil, Madras. The first volume contains the translation of the Isa, Kena and Mundaka, and the second, Katha and Prasna Upanishads by *S. Sitarama, Sastri*, B. A., and the third volume, that of the first four chapters of the Chandogya, by *Ganganath Jha*, M. A., F. T. S. They are all accompanied with the translation of Sri Sankara's commentary. The fourth volume of this important series of publications containing the concluding chapters of the Chandogya was reviewed in our issue of last April. Like Mr. Mahadeva Sastri's works they form an exceedingly valuable acquisition to the students of Vedic religion.

We have also received with thanks "Akulalhari" or "The Waves in Spirit" by "A seeker after Truth". It is in Bengali and written in verse. As the name of the book and the *nom-de-plume* of the author will show its subject matter is philosophical.

*Part I. Price As 8.
" II. „, Rs. 1-8.

NĀNĀ KATHĀ

The fifteenth *Ramakrishna Utsab* is being celebrated from the 10th to the 17 August at the Kakurgachi *Vogodām*, Calcutta. On the last day singing processions of admirers and followers by hundreds will meet at the above gardens and spend it in sacred devotion. It is worth noting that on this occasion too *Khichri Prasād* is partaken of by the rich and poor alike without any caste or creed prejudices.

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We are very glad to inform our readers that the Swami Turiyananda who was teaching at New York proceeded early last month to Los Angeles to conduct a new Vedanta Centre there. We are sure our readers will join us in wishing him all success.

—
Our kind friend Miss Waldo, has again sent us Rs. 45-13 for the famine fund. Of this amount \$ 10 has been subscribed by Mrs De Wolfe of New York, for which we offer her our best thanks.

—
The report from Swami Kalyanananda shows that the number of children in the Orphanage is now 124 (84 boys and 40 girls) i. e. seventeen less than what it was last month. The rather sudden fluctuations in the number of children are due to the fact that people, who, rendered homeless by poverty, wander about to try their chance in various places, commit their children to the care of the Orphanage and take them away when they leave the place. Some important improvements have also been done to the Orphanage houses which have made them much more convenient and comfortable. This, together with the other sanitary mea-

sures that have carefully been taken (such as the using of phenyle and red powder, the refining of water, etc.) account for the steady good health of the children. The children are having two full meals of *dal* and *chapati* every day, and in all other ways they are, we gladly note, getting on well.

The number of outside poor who have been receiving help from the 17th of May last, has now risen to about 400 daily. As there is yet no sign of abatement of the general distress in Rajputana the number of these destitute people is still increasing. The Swami Kalyanananda thinks it highly necessary to provide some of the women with clothes, and if only funds allow, he will soon supply this urgent demand.

We are very glad to say that in response to our appeal the following contributions have been sent us for which we offer our best thanks to the donors thereof :—

Rs. As.

Mr. A. P. Mullick, Tezpur,

Assam ... 10

„ K. Gundu Rau, Resident's office, Hyderabad ... 10

Through Mr. Gursoo Dumooji,

Asst. Supdt., Matheran.... 84 3

„ „ R. Venkata Subbiah, Valloor, 6 3

Of the sum received from Mr. Dumooji, Rs. 20 was subscribed by himself, Rs. 15 by two of his friends and the rest by some working people of Matheran. The amount sent by Mr. Subbiah was made up of small contributions from 122 persons—the sums varying from quarter of an anna to four annas! This gratifying instance of the poor being moved to charity by the distress of the poor, is worthy of permanent record.

Since his last acknowledgement, the Swami Kalyanananda has received with thanks the following contributions :—

	Rs.	As.
Through Math, Belur	400	
„ Editor, Prabuddha Bharata	400	
„ Editor, Bharati	5	
Babu Nalini Kanta Gupta, Secy		
S. F. R. A. Chittagong	25	
„ Mrinal Chandra Ker, Sherajunge, Pabna	32	2
Pandit Kalish Chandra Vidyavenode, Barisal	16	8
Babu Krishnanath Dhurandhar, Bombay	5	
Kaistha Collage, Allahabad	5	
<i>Krishnarpanam</i>	5	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	893	10

THE Khandwa Relief Centre has been closed at the beginning of this month—there being no longer any necessity for it, as the rains have improved the state of things in the Central Provinces. The following is a brief account of the number of people relieved, the different shapes in which help was given, and the money spent on each item :—

During the whole period (May, June and July) the total number of people relieved was 13,837, comprising 2,713 men, 5,930 women and 5,194 children. Of these 3,343 people belonged to high caste families, numbering eightyseven, 4,754 to one hundred and thirty overburdened lower caste families and 5,740 were destitute people incapable of any work. Each adult member of the first and second class received grain at the rate of 8 chittacks, each child 4 chittacks, and each adult and child of the third class was given 6½ and 4 chittacks of grain respectively, every day.

The total quantity of grain given away was 141 mds. 6 srs. and 13 chittacks : of this

15 mds. 11 srs. was wheat ; 95-16-5 rice ; 30-19-8 *dat* and the amount of money it cost was Rs. 632-12-9. Help was also given in the shape of money and clothes. Rs. 200 was given away through Mr. W. Paisly, Extra Asst. Commissioner, to some high caste Hindus living outside of Khandwa to enable them to purchase seeds for cultivation and provisions for immediate use. The sum of Rs. 62-3-3 was given away in money locally. 550 pieces of cloth and 200 blankets costing Rs. 373-13-6 were distributed, mostly in the Govt. Relief Camps.

We cannot conclude this short account without expressing our sincere gratitude to Babu Peary Lal Ganguly, Pleader, Khandwa, who put the Swami Sureshwarananda up in his own home and helped the relief work in every way.

WE are very glad to learn that the band of devoted workers of this order (the Ramakrishna Mission) prove themselves the very salt of the earth wherever they go. Their famine relief operations in Rajputana have won them the golden opinion of those who went to the spot ; and their Orphanage is a wonder of economy along with efficiency. In Calcutta they are none the less busy. Plague and Cholera have given them a good chance to be of some use to suffering humanity. During the two months of April and May they did much sanitary work in the filthy *bustis* situated in wards 1, 2 and 3, with splendid success. Though the benefit derived must, in the very nature of the work be temporary, it none the less saved a number of people from falling an easy prey to those two fell diseases. The work was necessarily confined to the poorest classes who were unable to pay for cleansing and disinfecting their houses, drains and closets. An establishment, consisting of 2 gully-pit boys, 1 bhisti, 3 dhawgars, 6 mehtars, and 1 mate, under the guidance of Swami

Sadananda, cleansed and disinfected in the course of less than two months about 1,300 *busti* huts and 40 pucca houses, removed 160 cart loads of refuse and disinfected 24 houses where plague or cholera broke out. And this at an expenditure of about Rs. 128. The Chairman and the Health Officer of the Calcutta Corporation were both highly pleased with the help thus rendered by the Mission to the work of sanitation in Calcutta. We would there were many such Missions to take a variety of works intended to help poor Indians intellectually, physically and morally.—*The Advocate, Lucknow.*

IT is true that we have genealogically descended from beasts. In our heads there are the rudiments of old tusks, with which we used to crack bones for the marrow they contained. In our toes there are the unused sinews with which we swung from tree limbs. In our brains there is the instinct of killing, and meat eating, and blood lapping, which the tiger yet shows. We are tigers that have learned to cook. We have learned to use the forces of nature.

Stand on a high place and look down and up Broadway. Under all the bobbing hats there are men who eat ounces of meat and swallow ounces of blood daily. And for what purpose?

To give them strength to contend with their fellow men. To make them aggressive and strong. To enable them to evolve schemes whereby they may make money and collect rents and clip coupons, and breed patches on the garments of other men.

No rice-eating, curry-cooking nation ever succeeded in the history of the world. National success is based on brains, and brains are based on blood.

But do not be cast down. We are travelling in the path of light and right. If we eat our little brothers and sisters that fly and go

on all fours, or creep and crawl, or grow green in the woods, it is all for the best. In the present stage of evolution the human race is decidedly on top.—*The New York Journal.*

[IT is true that in the present stage of evolution in the world that is known to us, the human race is on the top. But is not that event due to their having ceased to be tigers and monkeys? Is it not that the less they possess of the tiger and monkey instincts and impulses they rise in the scale of civilisation?

'We are tigers that have learned to cook'. But what a difference has this simple art made in our anatomy, physiology and psychology! Shall we forget agriculture and its still more transforming effects? Shall we forget too that blood is not made from meat alone, but from cereals, grains and fruits also?

We do not call the attributes and functions enumerated in the third paragraph of the foregoing reprint 'beneficial variations' but 'failures' to be man. From the standpoint of Western civilisation which is no doubt materially high but spiritually low, they may be called advantageous, but they will be seen to be exactly the opposite when looked at from the viewpoint of the all-round civilized man.—Ed. P. B.]

THE following lines are culled from a private letter:—

Swami Vivekananda arrived in New York from California on 7th June. His old friends were all most delighted to see him again. He lectured on four successive Sundays, and although it was so late in the season, the audiences were large and appreciative. He also held a *Gitā* class on four Saturday mornings. He has broadened in his sympathies and expanded in his knowledge during his four years of absence from America. While the season is now over for lectures and classes, Swamiji's old friends are basking in the sunshine of his presence. His health is now excellent and he is his dear old self once more, with yet a mingling of a newer, nobler self that makes us adore him more than ever.....He has to be a world's worker and so no rest can be for him until that great work is done.